

Astoria author will read newest children's book in St. Helens

A reading of Petra Mathers' latest children's book, *Herbie's Secret Santa*, will be accompanied by a slide show, some very special cookies and book signing by the author. St. Helens Book Shop will host the reading at 2:00 p.m. on November 29.

Suitable for children ages four to eight, Herbie is ready for

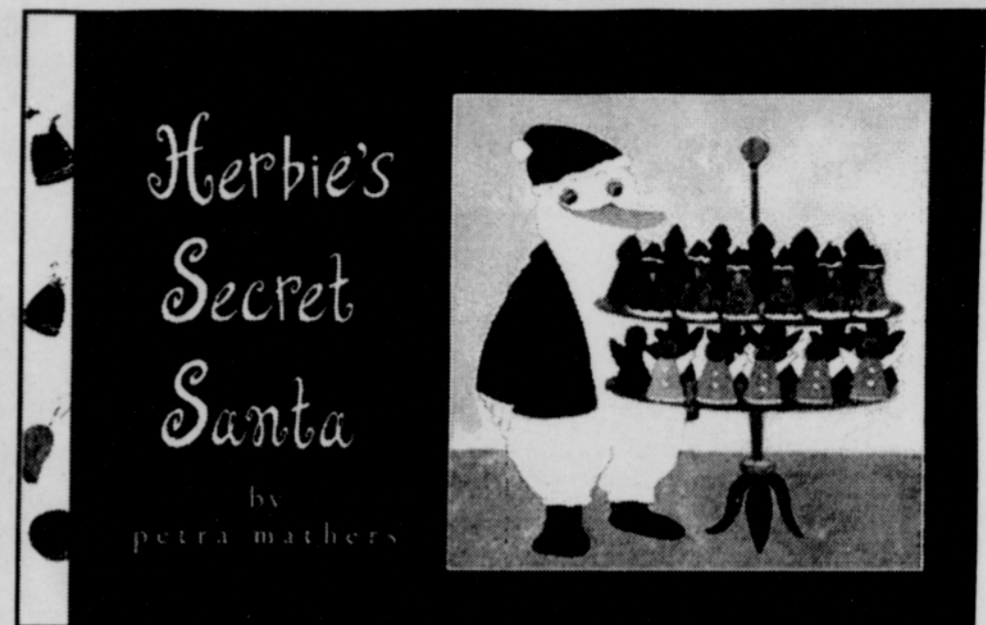
Christmas, dressed as Santa and humming a tune. But, when he and best friend, Lottie, set off to buy a tree in Oyster-ville, then find themselves in Ali Baba's bakery, the holidays take a turn for the worse.

Herbie's Secret Santa is published by Atheneum Books.

Petra Mathers was born in

Todtmoos, in the Black Forest region of Germany, and moved to Portland when she was 23. She now resides in Astoria. She has been involved with books most of her life, selling, editing or writing them.

She has illustrated 18 books by other authors, and written and illustrated 10 books, with



more on the way. Four of Mathers' books have appeared on the annual New York Times list of Ten Best Illustrated Children's Books. Her books have been frequently cited on best book lists by School Library Journal and Parent's Choice Magazine. The award-winning author earned the New York Society of Illustrators Silver Medal in 1995 for *Kisses from Rosa* and in 1999 for *Lottie's New Friend*.

St. Helens Book Shop is lo-

cated at 1550 Columbia Blvd. in St. Helens. For more information on the Literary Arts Series, contact the St. Helens Public Library at 503-397-4544 or St. Helens Book Shop at 503-397-4917.

The Literary Arts Series is a collaboration of the St. Helens Public Library, the Friends of the St. Helens Public Library, the St. Helens Book Shop and the Columbia Foundation. All events are free to the public.

Play it safe when using candles for festive decorations or for light

While candles can add a special touch to home decorating, they can also present a fire hazard. Last year in Oregon, there were 168 candle related fires, causing one fatality, 26 injuries and \$1,944,097 in property loss.

"Most candle fires start when they are left burning, unattended. That's why the Insurance Information Service of Oregon & Idaho (IISOI) encourages you to "blow it out, before you go out," says IISOI Executive Director, Krista K. Fischer.

Only you can prevent candle fires. The Insurance Information Service of Oregon & Idaho recommends following some simple guidelines -

- Stay in the same room with burning candles; never leave them burning unattended. Always make sure candles are blown out before leaving home or going to bed.

- Keep candles away from things that can burn. Keep candles at least one foot away from clothing, curtains, upholstered furniture, greenery, decorations and any other flammable items. Always use a sturdy metal,

glass or ceramic candleholder.

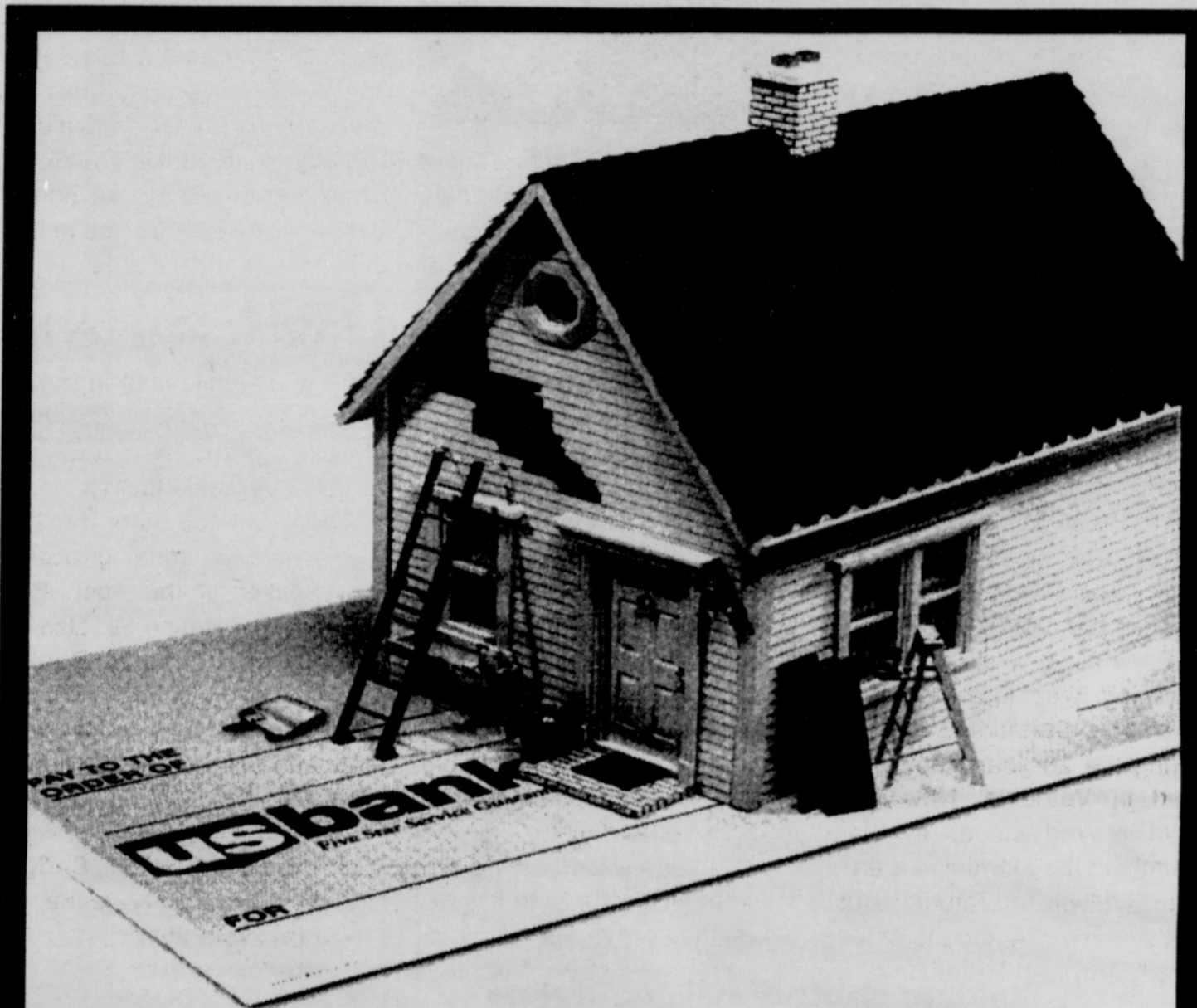
- Place candles out of reach of children and pets. Many candle fires are started when pets knock them over, or when children touch or play with them.

- Keep wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch. This keeps the candle from smoking.

- Avoid candles with combustible items embedded in them such as twigs, flowers or leaves. These items can ignite and even explode, causing fire.

Remember to make sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area and in every bedroom. Consider a home fire sprinkler system for increased protection.

For free consumer brochures on fire safety, crime prevention tips, surviving cold weather, home or renters insurance, contact the Insurance Information Service of Oregon & Idaho at 5100 SW Macadam Avenue, Ste 350, Portland OR 97239; 503-241-1757 or 1-800-457-8713, or visit the website at www.insuranceoregon.org



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